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COALITION PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

CPA DAILY

The Marshes

- Problem of catastrophic reduction of natural marsh areas created by extensive irrigation drainage works (irrigation and drainage canals and dikes diverting water from the marshes), as well as a wholesale reduction of peak flood flows through massively large upstream dam projects in Turkey. Some of marsh area destruction was politically engineered by Saddam Hussein and his "scorched earth" policies during the war against Iran and later against the Sunni Muslims in the Basra area.
- Much of the original design of the irrigation and drainage networks criss-crossing Iraq was conceived by British engineers in the 1950's and 60's as part of an economic development strategy, and reinforced by a comprehensive 20-volume Russian study, in 1981, of intensive irrigation and drainage development in Iraq.
- Iraq's original marsh area in the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates covered about 15-20,000 km² of which about 95% has been altered, perhaps irretrievably from an ecological standpoint.
- There are 3 key historical marsh areas: (i) the central marsh, originally straddling the confluence of the Tigris-Euphrates (ii) the Al Hammar marsh, south of the Euphrates, draining into the Shatt el Arab R., and the Al Hawizeh-Al Azim, which straddles the Iraq-Iran border.
- The last vestigial remnant of the marshes is the Al Hawizeh (Iraqi part) and Al Azim (Iranian part) and even that has been altered substantially, so that only a third remains. And they continue to be altered and diminished. The Iranians just built a large dam on the Karakheh R, which will provide water for a 150,000 hectare irrigation scheme and provide fresh water for Kuwait (via pipeline)

From: Brief Overview on Marsh Maintenance/Restoration Initiatives
By the Ministry of Irrigation (Eugene Z. Stakhiv, Senior

Diary

1400 – Background Brief – CJTF7/CPA Spokesman

1700 – Amb Bremer - Press Conference – Arabic Media

Key Messages

- Coalition Forces continue to robustly patrol Iraq to eliminate crimes against people and property, rid populated areas of weapons, ammunition and explosives, and stop the black market trade in fuel and other commodities.
- Coalition Forces continue to conduct joint security patrols with Iraqi police in their efforts to increase the professionalism of the police force and prepare them for their role in a self-governed Iraq.
- Our task now is to help the Iraqis rebuild their economy.
- Economic team are working hard on a number of initiatives which will help get the economy going, and provide some much-needed jobs.
- After decades of manipulation and mismanagement, the road to a free and flourishing economy will not be an easy one. But we've already taken one big step: which was the ending of sanctions.

Key Quote

We are also working to support the longer term reconstruction of Iraq. Much of the finance for this will come from Iraq's own oil revenues, initially through the Development Fund for Iraq, and subsequently through Iraq's own budget. But the international community also has an important role to play. In New York last week, informal meetings including Iraqi representatives, began preparations for a Donors' Conference which is expected to take place in October, and agreed details of the assessment that the World Bank, IMF and United Nations will carry out during the intervening months. DFID will consider how best we can contribute to this longer term reconstruction effort in the light of this work.

Years of sanctions, and mismanagement by the Saddam regime have left the Iraqi economy very weak. Even before the conflict only about half the Iraqi workforce was in full-time employment. Iraq's oil wealth, and its relatively well educated population, should enable it to grow rapidly once security has stabilised and a representative government is in place that can take long term economic policy decisions.

Baroness Amos, statement to the House of Lords, 3 July